



April 11, 2007

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Community Town Hall Called to Look at County's Response in Fight Against Crystal Meth Abuse

WHAT

The Act Now Against Meth Coalition will host a community town hall to discuss the Crystal Meth pandemic in Los Angeles and review the county's action plan to address it. Experts and public health officials attending and reporting including Ms. Donnalyn Anton, Los Angeles Unified School District, Patrick Ogawa, Director, Alcohol and Drugs Program Administration, Mario Perez, Director, Office of AIDS Programs and Policy, Dr. Marvin Southard, Director, Department of Mental Health and Dr. Javier Lopez, researcher. KCET's Val Zavala will serve as moderator.

The coalition previously went before the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors with 10,000 petitions that demanded that the County take action **declare a public health emergency**, including four other action items.

"The use of Crystal Meth by youth, women, gay men and minorities is out of control and we don't have a strategy to fight it," said Richard Zaldivar, a leader in the coalition and executive director of The Wall Las Memorias Project, "The town hall is one of several tools we're using to get people to wake up and realize that Crystal Meth addition is destroying families and communities."

WHEN

Tuesday, April 17, 2007, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

WHY

Quick facts about Crystal Meth and its use:

- A study of 19,000 conducted by the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center in 2005 found that nearly one in three homosexual men who tested positive for HIV last year reported using Crystal, a percentage that has tripled since 2001.
- Data from the CA Dept. of Alcohol and Drug Programs shows treatment admissions for methamphetamine have been rising since 2000 and began exceeding marijuana, heroin, crack and alcohol in 2005.
- Some researchers have used a military metaphor to describe the drug: If cocaine can be thought of as a conventional weapon, Crystal Meth is like a nuclear weapon.
- Students of the Los Angeles Unified School District use Crystal Meth at twice the national average.
- Latinas are the largest group receiving treatment for Meth addition in California.

WHERE

SEIU Local 721, 500 South Virgil Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90020

ETC.

The Act Now Against Meth Coalition grew out of a growing concern among AIDS

service providers, community leaders and concerned individuals about the increasing use of Crystal Meth.

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